
REPORT
OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT
OF THE
FLORIDA INSANE ASYLUM,
FOR THE PERIOD
BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 1890, AND ENDING
DECEMBER 31, 1890.

REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF FLORIDA INSANE ASYLUM.

CHATTAHOOCHEE, FLA., Dec. 31, 1890.

The Honorable, the Board of Commissioners of State Institutions:

GENTLEMEN—The year was begun with two hundred and forty-nine (249) inmates, one hundred and twenty-seven (127) of whom were males, the balance, one hundred and twenty-two (122) being females.

There were admitted, sixty-four (64), thirty-six (36) men and twenty-eight (28) women; and discharged, seventy-four (74), and the total number, resident and treated, during the year was three hundred and thirteen (313).

Without going further into details, the tables accompanying this report will show the number died; discharged and the condition of the latter on leaving the Asylum; also the general history and movements of the population during the year.

During the first half of the year, in consequence of the greatly overcrowded condition of the institution, I was compelled to reject many applications for admission from various parts of the State, there being often not only a spare or vacant room, but not even a spare or vacant bed in the institution, and no suitable place to put one. I am happy to congratulate you, as well as the people of the entire State, that no such emergency is again likely to occur, at least for some time to come, as the additions to the present buildings, now in process of construction, are likely to prove sufficient for all demands of the kind that are likely to arise during the next couple of years. Taking into consideration the overcrowding that has prevailed, the imperfect sanitary provisions and the inadequate and uncertain water supply, we may esteem ourselves fortunate indeed that no serious endemic disease, if we may except the la grippe, has found lodgment among us, and that we have entirely escaped even the suspicion of anything of an epidemic character. True, our death rate has been exceptionally high

for the last six months, but when it is known and understood that the unfavorable conditions above referred to have been supplemented by the miasma and effluvia with which the walls and floors have become saturated during a dozen years of occupancy as a hospital, and against which no amount of scrubbing, scouring, deodorizing and disinfection would avail, nothing but fire being a sufficient application, and equal to the occasion. A considerable proportion, too, of those who have died were chronic cases of long standing, and whose vital forces were at such low ebb, that they had no power to resist physical ailments of any kind, and where once seized, easily fell victims to assaults that persons of ordinarily fair health and vigor would have readily recovered from. Again, quite a number of those committed by the various judges to the asylum during the last six months, were almost moribund (in a dying condition) when received, one dying in nine days after entrance to the ward, and several others who died in from ten to sixty days.

REQUIREMENTS.

First in importance to be mentioned under this head, is the need of some provision whereby the institution can be supplied with a certain, constant and assured sufficiency of water. The means at hand for that purpose, since my connection with the asylum, having been wholly inadequate to meet the demands upon it, and, notwithstanding the fact that we have a large and fine cistern capacity, supplemented by, first, a twelve-foot windmill placed on the tower in the department for white males, for the purpose of pumping water from a well in the foot of said tower, and, second, after a lengthy trial of the windmill, sufficient to establish its total inadequacy, the substitution of a hot-air engine which proves to be less efficient as a motor than the windmill itself.

In this connection I would recommend the purchase of a thirty to forty horse-power engine, located suitably. It would not only furnish a full supply of water throughout the institution, but could, in the event of a fire in any portion of the buildings, by direct pressure on the columns of water playing on the fire, increase its efficiency as an extinguisher by many fold, and when we take into consideration the character of the structures with which, in the event of a fire, we shall have to deal (a collection of brick shells with wooden linings), we cannot help being impressed with a sense of the awful danger with which we stand menaced, nor with the meagerness of the means at our command for combating it, and which would be none too ample had we the whole Chattahoochee river from which to draw. I have no desire to pose as an alarmist, nor as a sensation monger, but, taking the most favorable view of the

situation which sound judgment and common sense will permit, it can be only a question of time till the thing we apprehend, will be upon us; then woe be to that man or men, who, from thoughtlessness, indifference, neglect a feeling of false security, or from whatever reason, has failed to make provision for meeting the danger commensurate with the danger itself. With all these means at command, I have been obliged, on several occasions, and for weeks at a time, to take the farm teams from other and much needed work and haul for the ordinary daily housework from fifteen to thirty barrels of water. Permit me to inquire what would have been the consequences of a fire among the buildings at any one of these times? The cisterns and tanks all empty, the windmill and hot-air engine unequal to the work required, with only a few barrels of water at any given point, and the only source of supply a quarter of a mile away, we have the buildings, with the exception of a few shattered and crumbling fragments of what were once brick walls, a bed of ashes. And what of the inmates? That mass of helpless, dependent humanity. How many have escaped the awful catastrophe? And naught but the infinite goodness and mercy of God has prevented this picture becoming a horrible reality. Let us hope that our Legislature, which is supposed to represent the aggregated wisdom of the State, which has the power, and upon whom rests all the responsibility, will rise to the occasion, and give us such an appropriation for the next ensuing two years' work as will place us beyond the necessity for further like apprehension, and enable us to make its occurrence an impossibility. There is paid out (in cash) for laundering the sum of four hundred and eight (408) dollars for each twelve (12) months, which sum, taken in connection with the saving in wear and tear of clothing which could be effected by procuring proper machinery and doing the work in the institution, would go a long way towards paying for the said machinery, besides an absolute saving of the time of one man and team one day in each week throughout the year. I have purchased for the institution, by order of the Board, one horse, two mules, one two-horse wagon, one set double harness, and the necessary farming implements, and a lot of carpenter tools, besides the necessary utensils for bakery, kitchen and dining-room service, the greater part of which is in first-class condition. In addition to which I have had built a first-rate bakers' oven, with a clear floor baking capacity of eight feet wide by ten feet in length. There has been done, besides the foregoing, a very considerable amount of renovating and general repairing. We have grown upon the farm, during the past year, some sixteen (16) acres of oats, which harvested about five thousand (5,000)

bundles; about six (6) acres of Irish potatoes, which yielded some four hundred and fifty (450) bushels; seven acres (7) of sweet potatoes, made six hundred and fifty (650) bushels; seventy (70) acres in corn, turned out some five hundred and fifty (550) bushels of grain and upwards of six thousand (6,000) bundles of excellent fodder.

Besides the work of general renovation and repairs alluded to above, the burning in the early days of last June of our old barn rendered necessary the construction of a place in which to house our crop of corn and fodder, which was met by the erection of a cheap building twenty-two (22) by thirty (30) feet in size upon the ground, and which was so divided as to give us two (2) cribs seven (7) by thirty (30) feet, and nine (9) feet high, and a fodder loft twenty-two (22) by thirty (30) feet, and seven (7) feet to the eaves, and also the space from the eaves of the roof to the comb of it.

In conclusion, I owe very much of what success I may have attained to the faithful and generous support and assistance my employes have given me, and I most heartily congratulate your honorable body upon the generally satisfactory condition of the institution; the result of the careful attention you have given your trust; and with the hope that its prosperity and usefulness may always and ever increase, I subscribe myself very respectfully yours,

J. N. SMITH, M. D.,
Superintendent.

TABLE No. 1.

NUMBER of Patients admitted, discharged, died and remaining in each month of the fiscal year ending December 31st, 1890.

[illegible]

TABLE NO. 2.

DIAGNOSIS of admitted during the fiscal year, ending
December 31st, 1890.

<i>Diagnosis.</i>	<i>Men.</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Mania, Acute.....	5	8	13
Mania, Chronic.....	4	1	5
Mania, Recurrent.....	3	4	7
Monomania.....	5	3	8
Melancholia.....	6	6	12
Dementia.....	3	3	6
General Paralysis.....	2	.....	2
Epileptic Mania.....	.....	.....	.....
Epilepsy, Simple.....	4	.....	4
Idiocy.....	1	1	2
Moral Insanity.....	1	.....	1
Not Insane.....	2	2	4
Total.....	36	28	64

TABLE NO. 3.

<i>Diagnosis and Condition of all Patients Dec. 31, 1890.</i>	<i>Men.</i>				<i>Women.</i>			
	<i>Improved.</i>	<i>Improving.</i>	<i>Stationary.</i>	<i>Total.</i>	<i>Improved.</i>	<i>Improving.</i>	<i>Stationary.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Acute Mania.....	2	4	3	9	3	3	.....	6
Chronic Mania.....	14	13	10	37	20	24	11	55
Recurrent Mania.....	4	4	.....	8	6	3	3	12
Monomania.....	2	1	3	6	4	.....	5	9
Melancholia.....	5	3	8	16	4	.....	4	8
Dementia.....	1	2	7	10	2	.....	12	14
General Paralysis.....	1	.....	3	4	.....	.....	.....	.....
Epileptic Mania.....	3	3	3	9	1	.....	4	5
Epilepsy, Simple.....	2	.....	5	7	.....	.....	4	4
Moral Insanity.....	.....	.....	1	1	.....	.....	.....	.....
Idiocy.....	.....	.....	11	11	.....	.....	8	8
	34	30	54	118	40	30	51	121

TABLE NO. 4.

<i>Nativity.</i>	<i>Men.</i>	<i>Women.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Florida.....	63	58	121
Austria.....	1	.....	1
Alabama.....	3	9	12
California.....	2	.....	2
Connecticut.....	1	.....	1
Cuba.....	3	1	4
Delaware.....	1	1	2
England.....	2	3	5
France.....	1	1	2
Georgia.....	19	17	36
Germany.....	3	2	5
Greece.....	1	.....	1
Iowa.....	2	1	3
Indiana.....	1	2	3
Illinois.....	2	1	3
Ireland.....	3	3	6
Kentucky.....	1	1	2
Mississippi.....	1	1	2
Michigan.....	.....	.....	0
Maryland.....	1	1	2
New York.....	2	2	4
New Jersey.....	1	1	2
New Hampshire.....	.....	.....	0
North Carolina.....	18	7	25
Ohio.....	1	1	2
Pennsylvania.....	2	2	4
Prussia.....	1	.....	1
South Carolina.....	9	18	27
Spain.....	2	1	3
Sweden.....	3	.....	3
Scotland.....	1	3	4
Texas.....	.....	1	1
Tennessee.....	2	2	4
Virginia.....	3	3	6
Wisconsin.....	.....	1	1
Unknown.....	7	6	13
	163	150	313

TABLE No. 5.
Admissions by Counties during Fiscal Year.

<i>Counties.</i>	<i>Men.</i>	<i>Women.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Columbia.....	2	5	7
Calhoun.....	1	1	1
Duval.....	5	2	7
Escambia.....	3	.....	3
Franklin.....	4	.....	4
Gadsden.....	2	1	3
Hamilton.....	1	.....	1
Jackson.....	3	2	5
Leon.....	.....	2	2
Lake.....	1	1	2
Lee.....	1	1	2
LaFayette.....	.....	1	1
Marion.....	2	1	3
Monroe.....	1	1	2
Madison.....	.....	2	2
Manatee.....	1	.....	1
Orange.....	2	2	4
Polk.....	1	.....	1
Pasco.....	2	3	5
Putnam.....	2	.....	2
Santa Rosa.....	1	.....	1
St. Johns.....	1	.....	1
Taylor.....	1	.....	1
Volusia.....	.....	2	2
Walton.....	.....	1	1
	36	28	64